

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8249

INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 08776

EXDIS

GENEVA FOR US CSCE DEL

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: CSCE, FR

SUBJECT: SIGNS OF POSSIBLE FRENCH INTEREST IN PRE-CSCE
NATO SUMMIT IN MAY

REF: (A) PARIS 6811; (B) BONN 5558

1. SUMMARY: QUAI OFFICIAL EXPRESSES PREFERENCE FOR
ELEVATING MAY NATO COUNCIL MEETING TO SERVE AS WESTERN
CSCE SUMMIT AND HOLDS OUT SOME SLIGHT REPEAT SLIGHT
POSSIBILITY FRENCH PRESIDENT MIGHT ATTEND. END SUMMARY.

2. IN MEETING WITH EMBOFF APRIL 7, PIERRET, QUAI CHIEF
CSCE WORKING GROUP, REVERTED, AT HIS INITIATIVE, TO
QUESTION OF A POSSIBLE WESTERN SUMMIT RELATED TO CSCE.

3. PIERRET SAID THAT FORMAL FRENCH POSITION REMAINED
OPPOSED TO ANY CSCE RELATED WESTERN SUMMIT, AS PREVIOUSLY
REPORTED PARIS REFTEL. THIS WAS PARTICULARLY THE CASE
WITH RESPECT TO A WESTERN SUMMIT EITHER BEFORE OR AFTER

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A CSCE SUMMIT IN HELSINKI, WHICH, PIERRET THOUGHT,

FRENCH PRESIDENT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT WANT TO ATTEND.

4. HOWEVER, PIERRET SAID, EMPHASIZING THAT HE WAS SPEAKING PERSONALLY AND UNOFFICIALLY, GOF MIGHT PROVE MORE SYMPATHETIC TO IDEA OF ELEVATING MEETING OF NATO COUNCIL, NOW PLANNED FOR END OF MAY, TO SUMMIT LEVEL. SUCH A MEETING COULD MAKE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION BY AFFIRMING AT HIGHEST LEVEL ALLIED UNITY ON KEY CSCE POSITIONS STILL TO BE NEGOTIATED IN SUBSEQUENT "CRUNCH" PHASES OF PHASE II. (FYI: PIERRET NOW ASSUMES HELSINKI SUMMIT MAY NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL SEPTEMBER, AND THAT "CRUNCH" WILL THEREFORE COME IN JUNE AND JULY.)

5. REGARDING FRENCH PARTICIPATION AT SUCH A NATO SUMMIT IN MAY, PIERRET WAS EVEN MORE CAUTIOUS, REPEATING THAT HE WAS SPEAKING ON PURELY PERSONAL BASIS AND THAT THIS MATTER HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED FORMALLY WITHIN QUAI OR WITH THE ELYSEE. PIERRET, NEVERTHELESS, SAID THAT, IN HIS VIEW, IT WAS "NOT INCONCEIVABLE" THAT PRESIDENT GISCARD COULD PERHAPS BE PERSUADED TO PARTICIPATE. PIERRET ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SUCH PARTICIPATION, WOULD BE HISTORIC EVENT IN FRENCH-NATO RELATIONS, MADE POSSIBLE BY CSCE CONTEXT OF MEETING, AND GISCARD'S INTEREST IN QUIETLY REDUCING GAULLIST HERITAGE OF FRENCH-NATO DISCORD. HOWEVER, OUR SOURCE STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THIS IS ONLY A POSSIBILITY. FOR GISCARD MAY JUST AS WELL DECIDE FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS, THAT HIS ATTENDANCE IS IMPOSSIBLE. IN THAT CASE, CHIRAC WOULD TAKE HIS PLACE. CAUTIOUSLY PHRASED AS IT WAS, THE BURDEN OF PIERRET'S

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POINT SEEMED TO BE THAT IN ANY CASE THE FRENCH DISTINCTLY PREFER AN END OF MAY NATO SUMMIT TO DISCUSS CSCE OVER ALL OTHER POSSIBILITIES, AND THAT IN THE VIEW OF SOME QUAI MIDDLE LEVEL OFFICIALS, THERE DID SEEM TO BE AT LEAST SOME CHANCE THAT GISCARD HIMSELF MIGHT ATTEND.

6. IN LAST 24 HOURS, WE HAVE HAD SOME OTHER INDICATIONS OF FRENCH INTEREST IN ELEVATING MAY NATO COUNCIL MEETING TO SERVE AS CSCE WESTERN SUMMIT. THUS BRITISH EMBASSY COUNSELOR LEAHY TOLD POL COUNSELOR APRIL 8 THAT ANDREANI, QUAI DIRECTOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, HAD WITHIN LAST FEW DAYS EXPRESSED SIMILAR INTEREST IN SUCH A MEETING, WITHOUT, REPEAT WITHOUT, HOWEVER, REFERRING TO POSSIBILITY OF GISCARD'S PARTICIPATION. LEAHY ALSO SHOWED US A FRENCH PRESS SERVICE REPORT QUOTING QUAI SOURCES AS SUPPORTING THE IDEA OF A MAY NATO SUMMIT LINKED TO CSCE, BUT DENIED THAT BRITISH WERE PUSHING THE IDEA, AS SUGGESTED IN AN AFP REPORT FROM THE HAGUE.

7. COMMENT: IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE FULL SIGNIFICANCE OF ANDREANI'S AND PIERRET'S REMARKS, WHICH WERE MADE IN CONTEXT OF CONCURRENT REPORTS OF DEVELOPING EUROPEAN DISCUSSION OF MAY NATO SUMMIT (I.E., BONN'S REFTEL AND SECRET

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AFP 197 APRIL 7 FROM THE HAGUE). IF POSSIBILITY THAT GISCARD MIGHT BE PREPARED TO ATTEND SHOULD BECOME MORE SUBSTANTIAL, THIS WOULD, OF COURSE, ADD ENTIRELY NEW, VERY IMPORTANT ELEMENT TO SITUATION. IN THE MEANTIME, PLEASE NOTE IN THIS CONNECTION, THAT WE DID NOT CONVEY PIERRET'S SPECULATIONS TO BRITISH AND HOPE OTHER ADDRESSEES WILL FULLY PROTECT HIM AND SUBSTANCE HIS REMARKS.
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